United Nations A/69/628/Add.3

General Assembly

Distr.: General
15 May 2015

Original: English

Sixty-ninth session
Agenda item 132
Programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015

Estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council

Thematic cluster II: sanctions monitoring teams, groups and panels

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (A/69/363/Add.8), which contains the proposed resource requirements for the Panel of Experts on South Sudan for the period from 1 May to 31 December 2015. During its consideration of the report, the Committee met representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 4 May 2015.

II. Resource requirements for the Panel of Experts on South Sudan

2. The Panel of Experts on South Sudan was established pursuant to Security Council resolution 2206 (2015), in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to create, for an initial period of 13 months, a group of up to five experts under the direction of the Committee established in the same resolution to oversee an asset freeze and a travel ban imposed on individuals or entities designated by the Committee. The Council also requested the Secretary-General to make the financial and security arrangements necessary to support the work of the Panel and expressed its intention to consider the renewal of the mandate no later than 2 March 2016.

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3. The Secretary-General indicates that the Panel, which will be home-based, will carry out its mandated activities and monitor and collect information on the implementation by States of the measures imposed by the Security Council. Subject to the security situation, the Panel is expected to conduct extensive field work and on-site investigation of alleged violations and to make recommendations thereon. The Panel is also expected to submit to the Council an interim and a final report, as well as provide monthly updates on its activities that include specific recommendations (A/69/363/Add.8, para. 3).

4. The estimated requirements for the period from 1 May to 31 December 2015 would amount to $947,500 net and provide for the following (ibid., para. 7):

(a) Three positions (1 P-3 and 2 General Service (Other level)) to provide substantive and administrative support to the experts of the Panel ($134,500) (see paras. 6-8 below);

(b) Fees ($375,700) and official travel ($303,200) of the five members of the Panel;

(c) Official travel of staff ($19,100);

(d) Other operational and logistical support requirements, such as rental of premises, rental of vehicles, communications, information technology equipment and maintenance, and miscellaneous supplies and services ($115,000).

5. The Secretary-General indicates that, pending the preparation and submission of the budget proposal, the initial requirements of the Panel are being met through a commitment authority of the Secretary-General in the amount of $178,700 under the provisions of General Assembly resolution 68/249 on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses for the biennium 2014-2015, which will be reversed following the decision of the Assembly on the proposal (A/69/363/Add.8, para. 8). **In this connection, the Advisory Committee welcomes the early presentation to the General Assembly of the resource requirements for the Panel of Experts on South Sudan for the period from 1 May to 31 December 2015 by the Secretary-General. The Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will maintain that approach in the future.**

6. The Secretary-General is proposing the establishment of the following three positions (ibid., para. 6):

(a) One Political Affairs Officer (P-3) to provide substantive advice and support to the experts;

(b) One Research Assistant (General Service (Other level)) to provide research and administrative support to the Panel;

(c) One Administrative Assistant (General Service (Other level)) in the Executive Office of the Department of Political Affairs to manage the increased demand for administrative, financial and logistical support emanating from the expansion of the Panel of Experts on Libya in 2014 and the establishment of three panels of experts: the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic in 2013, the Panel of Experts on Yemen in 2014 and the Panel of Experts on South Sudan in 2015.

7. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the support provided by the staff to the expert panels reflected the scope of the mandate,

specific deliverables and activities when a sanctions regime was established. The Committee was also informed that, as a general rule, there was at least one Political Affairs Officer and one General Service staff member to support expert panels with four or more members. The Committee was further informed that every effort was made to use existing resources to support the work of the expert panels and their sanctions committees. For that reason, no General Service staff had been requested for the panels of experts on Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Sudan and Yemen, and no Professional staff support had been requested for the Panel of Experts on Liberia.

8. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly approve the proposed two positions of Political Affairs Officer (P-3) and Research Assistant (General Service (Other level)) for the Panel of Experts on South Sudan. With regard to the proposed position of Administrative Assistant (General Service (Other level)) in the Executive Office of the Department of Political Affairs, the Committee is of the view that the requirement should be considered in the proper context for special political missions under the programme budget, rather than in the proposed resource requirements for the Panel of Experts. The Committee therefore recommends against the proposed establishment of one position of Administrative Assistant (General Service (Other level)) at this stage. The related resources under the operational costs should be reduced accordingly.**

III. Recommendations

9. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly are contained in paragraph 10 of the proposed budget (A/69/363/Add.8). **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly:**

(a) Approve the budget in the amount of $874,800 (net of staff assessment) for the Panel of Experts on South Sudan for the period up to 31 December 2015;

(b) Appropriate, under the procedures provided for in paragraph 11 of annex I to its resolution 41/213, an additional amount of $874,800 under section 3, Political affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015;

(c) Appropriate an amount of $12,300 under section 36, Staff assessment, to be offset by a corresponding amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment, of the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015.